

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.

ANNUAL REPORT

- OF THE -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

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CHARD RURAL DISTRICT.

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COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31ST DECEMBER, 1940.

TO: THE CHARD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present a short Annual Report on the Sanitary Conditions of Chard Rural District for the Year ended 31st December, 1940.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

In common with the rest of the Country there have been many alterations in the conditions of living and working of the inhabitants of the area. More young men have been called to the Colours and their places have again to be filled by others; this and the additional work entailed by the War has caused unemployment to practically cease in this area.

A large number of children and a number of adults were evacuated into the district during the year. The children were medically inspected at the detraining centre before being allotted to various billets in the district.

A hostel for children who for various reasons were not in all respects suitable for billets was prepared, this later being transformed to a Sick Bay of 20 beds for children suffering from skin conditions and minor illness. Later in the year a second Sick Bay was in course of preparation while a Hostel for boys and one for girls were instituted.

The health of the District generally was good with the exception of a short but sharp outbreak of Influenza in the early months of 1940. The health of the evacuated children as a whole was extremely good during the year.

POPULATION.

The Registrar-General's estimated figure is 12,570. This doubtless does not make allowance for the temporary increase due to the present emergency.

	<u>BIRTHS.</u>		
	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Live Births:	156	80	76
Still Births:	10	7	3

DEATHS.

Total Deaths from all causes: 95 88

Deaths of Infants under one year, divided as follows:-

Under 1 week	...	3.
1 - 4 weeks	...	Nil.
1 - 6 months	...	3.
6 - 12 "	...	4. Total under 1 year 10.
(1)		

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever	...	...	27 cases.
Diphtheria	...	...	7 "
Pneumonia	...	...	17 "
Erysipelas	...	...	6 "
Whooping-cough	...	...	61 "
Measles	...	...	77 "
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	2 "

All cases of Diphtheria were admitted to Isolation Hospital. There was one death which occurred in a child from the village of Hinton St. George.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Number of new cases notified:-

		<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Respiratory	...	8	5
Non-Respiratory	..	2	4

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

Respiratory	...	4	-
Non-Respiratory	..	1	1

The Hospital and Health Services remain as in my previous reports with the exception of the Evacuation Hospitals already mentioned in this report and A.R.P. emergency arrangements.

Diphtheria Immunisation was again carried out during the year by the local Medical Practitioners among children from 10 months to 5 years, while numbers of school children were immunised at the primary schools under County Council arrangements. There still remain a certain number of young children who have not yet been treated. Parents are again strongly advised in such cases to have the procedure carried out without delay before the winter commences and the disease becomes more widespread.

WATER SUPPLIES.

No new schemes for Water Supplies have been undertaken during the year, and the existing schemes have been maintained in a satisfactory manner. Frequent analyses of the various supplies have been made and all were found to be satisfactory.

A general shortage was experienced during the Autumn, but it was not found necessary to restrict supplies to any great extent.

Improvements were carried out at the Winsham source which resulted in the collection of an additional 1,000 gallons per day.

SEWERAGE.

A good deal of difficulty has been experienced at the various sewage outfalls in carrying out the necessary maintenance works due to shortage of labour. All the outfalls are now being overloaded in consequence of the greatly increased population throughout the District, and it does not seem that these conditions can be improved under present circumstances.

HOUSING.

The standard of housing in the area has deteriorated owing to the influx of evacuees and war workers, as well as to the difficulty in obtaining the necessary labour and materials for carrying out repair

works. A number of condemned cottages have had to be utilised for the accommodation of evacuated families, although this step has only been taken in cases of extreme urgency and when the cottage has been found to be reasonably fit for temporary occupation.

Overcrowding has also presented a further problem although every effort has been made to reduce this to a minimum.

GENERAL.

As will be seen from the particulars as to the Sanitary circumstances of the District, the standards previously insisted on have unavoidably had to be lowered in all cases, and it would appear that conditions cannot be expected to improve during the present emergency.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

(sd) C. C. COURT, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health,
Chard Rural District Council.

16th August, 1941.

